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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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25X1

COUNTRY Bulgaria

REPORT

SUBJECT 17th Border Guard Zastava "Chernichevo" and Third Komandatura, Avren

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. The 17th Zastava is located in the southern outskirts of Chernichevo Village, Krumovgrad Okoliya. The Zastava has been at this location since 1950. Prior to 1950, the Zastava was quartered in the Chernichevo Village School and prior to that, in a private house in the village.
2. The Zastava is 500 meters from the Border Line at its closet point and is clearly visible from the Greek side of the Border because it is surrounded by tobacco fields.
3. A one-story, brick and stone construction is the Zastava main building. It has a red tile roof and is white-washed. The building has a part basement which serves as a storage room. There are also five wooden structures that house the bakery, the outdoor privies and the pig sty, the showers and washroom, the dog kennels and pigeon coops and the kitchen for the dogs. The Zastava area is surrounded by a barbed wire fence or barbed wire with branches interwoven about five feet in height, on the east, north, and west. The fence is in poor condition with many holes and gaps in it. On the south, there is no fence - just a dry river bed in a steep gully. The Zastava compound is dotted with fox holes and slit trenches. There are two bunkers (dirt and branches) completely neglected and unusable, and a trench for a machine gun. There is no electricity or radio in the Zastava. Water is obtained from two wells just outside the compound. One of these wells is in the dry river bed and is unusable after a rain or in the spring.
4. The Zastava is "Purva Kategoriya" (First grade) and operational. It is a part of the Fifth Otryad, Podelenie 4560, Headquartered in Cherbadzhischo Village, Momchilgrad Okoliya, Third Komandatura, Podelenie 4563, Headquartered in Avren Village, Krumovgrad Okoliya. Since August 1956, the code name of the Zastava has been "ROZA". Prior to that it was "EDELVAYS".
5. The Zastava complement consists of three officers, one Starshina and 27-28 soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Between March and October, the number of soldiers and non-commissioned officers is practically doubled to approximately 50 men - two Nabors. The rest of the time there is only one Nabor.

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a. Commander: Lt. Bonyu Petkov Kirovb. Assistant Commander: Lt. Kiril Yordanov Khristovc. Political Assistant: Senior Lt. Angel Ivanov Semerdzhievd. Starshina: Dimo Sarageloc

6. On official holidays, the Komandatura sends three to twelve soldiers to reinforce the Zastava personnel. If an incident occurs, the Komandatura sends reinforcements by truck. There is also a group of approximately 30 local men in Chernichevo Village that can be called in to help the Zastava in case of need. These civilians are issued arms at the Zastava. they were never called at the Zastava while he was there.

7. The Zastava armament consists of:

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- a. Four light machine guns, "Dekteryov" - 7.62 MM Caliber
- b. One light M.G. - "M.G." (German make)
- c. 25-30 sub-machine guns, "Shpagen" - 7.62 MM caliber
- d. One heavy machine gun, "Zenitka"
- e. Four pistols - 7.62 MM
- f. 25 rifles, "Vintovki" 7-62 MM
- g. 30 rifles, "Mauser" - not used by the Zastava soldiers; distributed among the local civilians in case of need.
- h. One flare pistol
- i. 50 handgrenades, "F1" or "F2".
- j. 4,000 rounds of ammunition for rifles
- k. 4,000 rounds of ammunition for machine guns.

8. The Zastava has four riding horses, two mules, ten carrier pigeons and four dogs. Only one of the dogs, "Blits", is used for tracking. Blits' trainer is Jr. Sgt. Blagoy Lazarov. He is the only one allowed to go near the dog. Blits cannot be neutralized with food or patting. The other three dogs, "Sliva", "Lyulyak", and "Dzhulbars" are plain watchdogs and can be easily neutralized. The Zastava has also one cart. The Zastava is supplied by the Avren Komandatura, and the mailing address is: Podelenie Roza, Chernichevo Village, Krumovgrad Okoliya. A Zastava soldier picks up the mail from the Chernichevo Selsuvet once a day.

9. The Commander of the Zastava makes up a duty roster "Razstanovka" every day. The Commander can alter the "Razstanovka" any time he wants to. One of the officers is always on duty for 24 hours at a time. Naryads, two soldiers, are armed with one "Vintovka" and 60 rounds of ammunition, one "Shpagen" and 60 rounds of ammunition and two handgrenades. Some nights, Naryads get a dog, also. The "secret" (ambush) gets a dog and the flare pistol.

10. On 1 May, 24 May, 27 August, 9 September, 5 December and 1 January, the Naryads are increased and the ammunition is upped to 120 rounds per "Shpagen". Normally in the daytime, there are two Naryads of two soldiers each in the two observation towers, from 0500 to 1900 hours and one two-man patrol with a dog from 0500 to 1300 hours. They patrol the entire Zastava sector. At night, there are four pairs patrolling the Zastava sector and two "secrets" of two men each. There also are two men patrolling the roads in the vicinity of the Zastava. There is always a guard on duty in the Zastava compound and a soldier on call (changed every twelve hours).

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- a. The observation tower Naryad takes two carrier pigeons, one pair of binoculars and a wristwatch and log along. One soldier is on top of the tower observing what goes on in Greek territory while his partner sleeps at the foot of the tower. They change places every two-three hours. At noontime, one of the pigeons is released with a routine message. The guard on duty in the Zastava compound looks out for the arrival of the carrier pigeons. On foggy days, the observation towers are not manned - the observers are sent to patrol the border path.
- b. The night patrols work eight hours from 1600 to 2400 hours and from 2300 to 0700 hours. The patrols are supposed to be responsible for an area of a minimum of 500 and a maximum of 1500 meters. In reality, they patrol between 1500 to 3000 meters. They walk one behind the other (the senior man is always behind) about two meters apart. According to regulations however, there is supposed to be a distance of 20 meters between the two patrolmen on a clear night and four to six meters on a dark night. Patrols are not supposed to smoke, talk or eat, but nobody abides by this order.
- c. "Secrets" are usually placed at cross-paths, at bridges over small gullies, close to water mills, etc. The soldiers of a "secret" are supposed to take positions about 40 meters apart and string, approximately a foot from the ground, a thin rope or a wire between them. This wire is called a "signalizer". The soldiers do not pay much attention if the "signalizer" is tripped or exploded, because this is done all the time by wild animals. Often soldiers take a dog along to warn them if a check is coming, since they usually sit together and one of them is asleep all the time. "Secrets" are not given near the Zastava.

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11. [] the best way to cross the border in the Chernichevo sector is about two-three kilometers east of Chernichevo. The potential crosser should wait for the patrol to walk by and then the way is clear. Local people, especially pomaks, should be avoided, because they take all strangers to the Zastava. In the case of a border guard defection, the following things take place:

- a. The entire complement of the Zastava including the officers, is replaced;
- b. The code name of the Zastava and all the signals are changed
- c. The affair is not hushed up

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[] they had the following signal system:

Two-shots - an officer needed

Three shots - tracks of a man discovered

Four shots - man in Bulgarian territory

Five shots - man crossed into Greece

Two shots and the explosion of a hand grenade - help needed

Two shots and flare from the Zastava - signal received and understood

A machine gun burst and the explosion of a hand grenade - all must return to the Zastava.

12. There are no bunkers, trenches, traps, mine fields or signal telephones in the border sector of the Zastava. There are, however, telephone lines to which telephones could be connected. [] they have such phones in the "Avren" Zastava Sector 25X1 All along the border line on Bulgarian territory, there is a stretch about 30 meters wide that has been cleared of trees. This was done in the summer of 1956. No such work was done on Greek territory. Between the cleared space and the border guard path, runs a plowed strip 15 meters wide. Every morning a two-soldier patrol with a dog inspects the strip. About 100 to 500 meters from the border line from Pyramids 139 to

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to 146, the eastern part of the Zastava sector, there is a barbed wire fence. No fence exists between Pyramids 122 to 139. The fence is in good condition and is impassable. The parallel wires are criss-crossed with wires running from the base and the upper part of one fence post to the next one. There is no guard or patrol path along the fence. Signal trip wires are mostly strung in the area between the barbed wire fence and the plowed strip. 25X1

13. Border guards have no special documents. When on leave, they carry a signed piece of paper. Border guards receive 15 days leave per year. Normally, leaves are granted in the summer. On occasions, soldiers get weekend passes and they go to Krumovgrad. No permits or passes are needed for movement in the area of the Zastava. Border guards are promised seven to ten days leave if they catch a person trying to escape or somebody who had crossed from Greece into Bulgaria.

14. The Zastava has a DSNM branch and all soldiers belong and pay 0.80 leva membership dues per month. Once a month, the DSNM Secretary, Diko Tsanov Dikov, calls a meeting. Special meetings are called on the eve of a big holiday, or if some soldier has committed a grave mistake. 25X1

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ATTACHMENT NO. 2 TO

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LEGEND TO SKETCH OF AVREN, THIRD KOMANDATURA:

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1. Sleeping Quarters
2. Commander
3. Chief of Staff
4. Secret Section
5. Not Known

6. Hallway
7. DSNM Club
8. Radio Center
9. Assistant Commander - Political Officer
10. Stable

11. Storage and Stable
12. Arsenal
13. Fodder Storage
14. Barn
15. Toilets

16. Pig Sty
17. Company Commander
18. Tailor Shop
19. Supply Officer
20. Company Supply Room

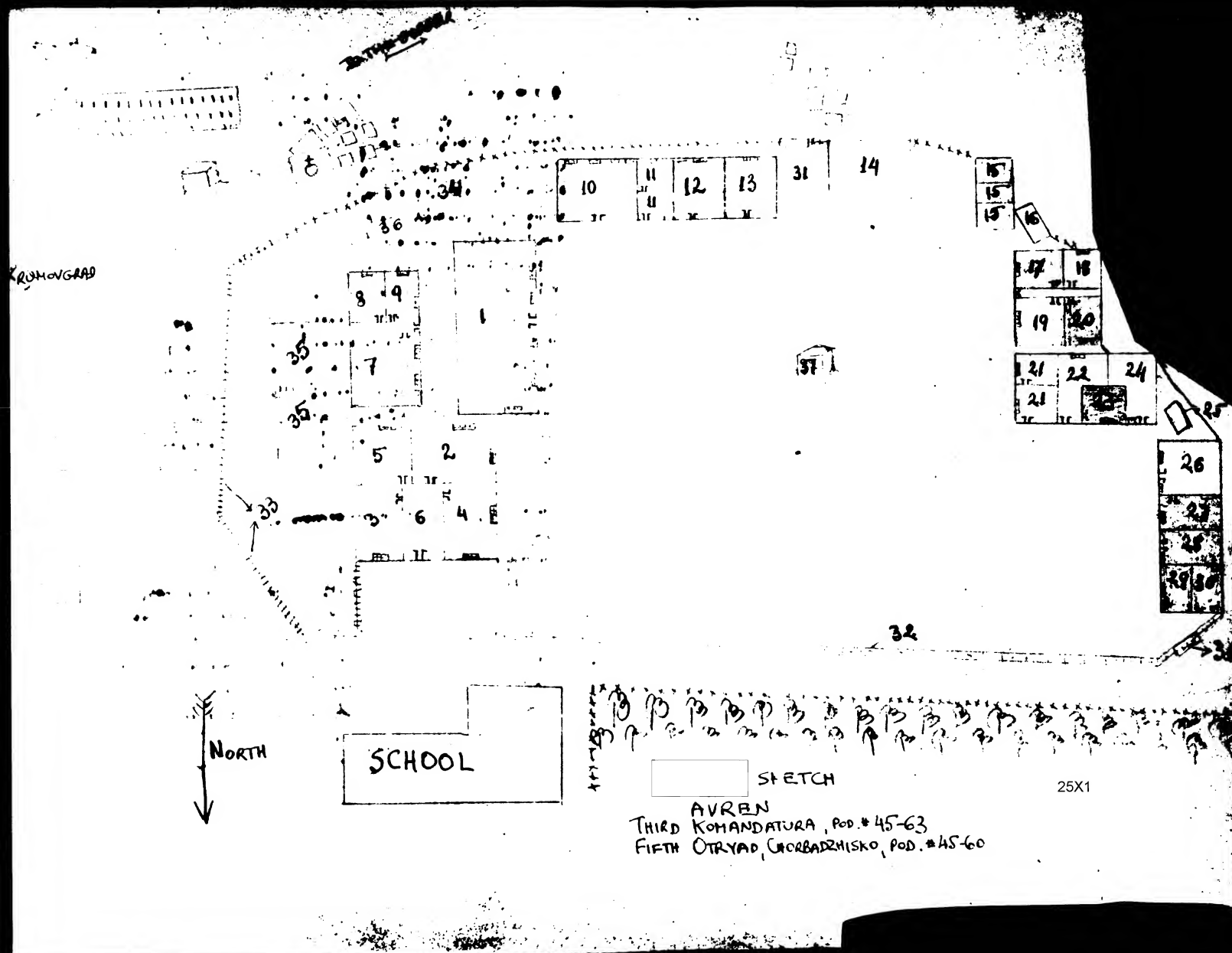
21. Commissary
22. Kitchen
23. Guard House
24. Bakery
25. Kennel

26. Mess
27. Supply Room
28. Fifth Section - Intelligence
29. Telephone Exchange
30. Officer of the Day

31. Main Entrance
32. Stone Wall
33. Wooden Fence
34. Barbed Wire Fence
35. Volley Ball Court

36. Lime Kiln
37. Water Well

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ATTACHMENT NO. L**CONFIDENTIAL****LEGEND TO SKETCH OF CHERNICHEVO ZASTAVA:**

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* Zastava Main Building (#1 to #12 represents a cut-away view of the main building)

1. Sleeping Quarters
2. Office
3. Arsenal
4. Office
5. Food Store
6. Laundry
7. DSNM Club Room
8. Kitchen
9. Mess
10. Reception Room
11. Guard Room
12. Corridor
13. Bakery
14. Showers
15. Dog Kitchen
16. Volley Ball Court
17. Bunkers
18. Machine Gun Emplacement
19. Toilets
20. Pig Sty
21. Water Wells
22. Barbed Wire
23. Wooden Fence
24. Kennels
25. Corridors
26. Pigeons
27. Exits to the Border
28. Place to Load and Unload Guns (Outgoing or Incoming Patrols)
29. Dry River Bed
30. Main Entrance
31. Flower Garden
32. Athletic Field

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ЧЕРНИЧЕВО - CHERNICHЕVO
 17th ZASTAVA - 3rd KOMANDATURA - 5th OTRYAD
 17th ZASTAVA - 3rd KOMANDATURA
 5th OTRYAD

↑ NORTH

